(vi) Support for provision of Individual Rural Phone Connection (RDELs) on demand in 1,685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs);

(vii) Support for 16,43,317 RDELs installed in the eligible 1,685 SDCAs during the period 01-04-2002 to 31-03-2005;

(viii) Support for providing Shareable Infrastructure for Wireless mobile services in rural and remote areas.

Shortfall of coal from indigenous sources

2724. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that shortfall of coal from indigenous sources has been increasing every year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken thereon;

(c) whether there is any initiative to use judiciously this non-renewable indigenous source of coal in the country and to find environmentally friendly alternative source of energy in place of coal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) to (d) As per Annual Plan, 2006-07, the estimated raw coal demand of 474.18 Mt in 2006-07 is planned to be met from domestic supply of 432.39 Mt which includes domestic production of 430.10Mt and a stock draw down of 2.29 Mt from CIL sources. This leaves a gap of 41.79 Mt which will be entirely met by proposed imports of 24.19 Mt of coking coal for steel sector and 17.60;Mt of non-coking coal for power, cement and others sectors, thus leaving no demand-supply gap. Coal India has taken following steps to increase indigenous production.

i) 100 mining projects are envisaged to be undertaken during Xth Plan.

ii) improvement in equipment utilization.

iii) timely implementation of projects.

iv) all new mines being planned with mechanization

v) increasing productivity in both underground and open cast mines.

vi) emergency coal production has been planned for increasing production in existing mines/projects.

Efforts are being made to exploit and use Coal in a judicious and environment friendly manner. Other sources of energy including environment friendly alternative sources of energy are also being exploited.

Coal accumulation in Jharkhand

†2725. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy stock of coal has accumulated at the pit head of three coal companies namely, CCL, BCCL and ECL situated in Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Good monsoon during the year 2005-06 resulted in unprecedented growth in hydel power generation and thus adversely affecting the demand of coal by thermal power stations. Improved availability of imported coal has also affected the despatch of coal.

(c) Coal India Limited has been advised to increase the sale of coal under e-marketing and the Thermal Power Stations have been advised to build up stock of coal at the normative level, in order to liquidate the stock.

Regulatory Commissions for Coal and Telecommunications

†2726. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any regulatory Commission is likely to be constituted for coal also on the lines of the similar commission constituted for Power and Telecommunication, so that, interests of the consumers are protected; and

(b) if so, by when?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.